

**MARKED-UP CLAIMS**

5. (Amended) A process according to claim 3 [or claim 4] wherein said process utilizes fresh rice husk as the vegetative material.

6. (Amended) A filler according to [any one of claims] claim 1 [or 2] when produced by a process [according to claim 4] comprising burning a fresh vegetative-based material, ground to a particle size from 100 mesh to 400 mesh, at about 803° to 804° C for 3 to 4 seconds.

7. (Amended) A method for improving the anti-static, flame retardant, accelerator, plasticiser and/or blowing characteristics of a composite material wherein said method comprises blending into the composite material with a carbonized vegetative-based filler according to claim 1 [or claim 2] and wherein said blending is substantially completed prior to incorporation of any additives, if any.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 7 [or claim 8] wherein the composite material is latex (NR/SR) the dosage of the carbonized vegetative filler is from 1.5 to 2.5 phr (parts per hundred).

10. (Amended) A method according to [any one of claims] claim 7 [to 9] wherein said composite material is selected from the group comprising:

- i) thermoplastic resins;
- ii) thermoset plastics;
- iii) rubbers and elastomeric materials;
- iv) conductive coatings;
- v) printing inks;
- vi) bitumen; and
- vii) concrete.

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11. (Amended) A composite material having improved anti-static, flame retardant, accelerator, plasticiser and/or blowing characteristics wherein said composite material is produced by the method of [any one of claims] claim 7 [to 10].

14. (Amended) A method according to claim 12 [or claim 13] wherein the rice husk and tyre crumb is mixed in composition with a palm oil effluent prior to it being added to the bitumen.

16. (Amended) A method according to claim 14 [or claim 15] wherein the composition is added in a dosage amount of about 20% by weight of the said bitumen.

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